

NEWS from Delaware Congressman

Michael N. Castle

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CASTLE, LOCAL OFFICIALS ANNOUNCE SIGNIFICANT FUNDING COMMITMENT TO JUMPSTART C & D CANAL RECREATION PROJECT

***Castle secured the necessary federal funding to move his C/D project
forward; state and local governments make matching funding
commitments***

WILMINGTON, DE ~ Delaware Congressman Mike Castle and local elected officials today announced \$300,000 in federal, state and local "down payment" funding to begin a study of recreational opportunities at the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. They also outlined the immediate steps to be taken to launch the reconnaissance study.

Castle has been working with the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a recreational area around the Canal modeled after the Cape Cod Canal in Massachusetts and first announced his plans last spring. The Corps agreed to work with Castle to develop this vision and this announcement will jumpstart the project, leading to a study, development of a vision, and public meetings.

"This is exciting news for all of the residents of New Castle County, and frankly all Delawareans, who need access to more recreational areas as their communities continue to grow and develop. This commitment of federal, local and state funding will help jumpstart this project and get the reconnaissance study off to the right start," Castle said. "I am hopeful this investment will provide the necessary resources to conduct a thorough study which will examine how to move forward with construction and eventually operations and maintenance of such an area. We must be thinking in broad strokes as we embark on this study and take every possible issue into consideration. In working with the state and local interests and the Army Corps of Engineers I know we will have a positive outcome."

. Castle highlighted the initial steps to be taken in the reconnaissance study:

- 1) Define the federal interest consistent with the Army's policies, costs, benefits, and environmental impacts and potential project alternatives. This will include a review of past and current recreational demand studies of New Castle County performed by the State of Delaware and possible other studies completed by the State of Maryland.

2) Complete an analysis of the areas above within 6 months or less that includes public meetings in Delaware and Maryland.

3) Prepare a Feasibility Cost Share Agreement (FCSA), which includes a Management-Plan (MP) describing the responsibilities, guidelines, tasks, costs estimate and schedule for the feasibility phase.

4) Assess the level of interest and support from the state and local sponsors in the identified potential solutions and cost sharing of the feasibility phase.

5) Agree to the FCSA and MP and move the project into the feasibility phase to fully define problems and opportunities, describe and evaluate alternative plans, and fully describe a recommended project.

Castle secured the federal investment of \$150,000 in the Fiscal Year 2005 Consolidated Conference Report, which the House and Senate have passed and President Bush will sign into law next week. Castle said the first "scoping" meeting to begin the determinations of this project will be held on Monday, December 6, 2004.